



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

2014.2015

SEASON OF EVENTS

A Choral Collage

University of Toronto Women's Chamber Choir

University of Toronto Men's Chorus

University of Toronto Women's Chorus

Sunday, October 19, 2014

2:30 p.m. MacMillan Theatre

Edward Johnson Building

The Faculty of Music gratefully acknowledges the generous support of our presenting sponsors



University of Toronto Women's Chamber Choir
Hilary Apfelstadt, conductor
Tracy Wong, assistant conductor
Eunseong Cho, collaborative pianist

How merrily we live

Michael East (ca. 1580-1648)

The Princess, Op.20a, H.80

Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

Tears, Idle Tears

O Swallow, Swallow

Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal

Nicole Becic, Stacy Collins, Lila Cooper, Florence Lee, Kelsey Robinson, Rachel Sherret
Tracy Wong, conductor

Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda (III), Op. 26, H.99

Gustav Holst

To the Dawn

To the Waters

To Vena

Hymn of the Travellers

Johanna Weinholts, harp

Gloria (*Canadian premiere*)

Larysa Kuzmenko (b. 1956)

University of Toronto Men's Chorus

André-Louis Heywood, conductor

Mark Ramsay, assistant conductor & collaborative pianist

Let Your Voice Be Heard

Abraham Adzenyah (b. 1939)

Nicholas Manalo, Liam West, Victor Cheng, Alex Sandoval, Seung Woo Noh, soloists
Carol Wang, marimba; Mackenzie Read, djembe

Alleluia (from *Cantata 142, Uns ist ein Kind geboren*)

attr. Johann Sebastian Bach

(1685-1750)

arr. Channing Lefebvre (1895-1967)

Pilgrims' Chorus (from *Tannhäuser*)

Richard Wagner (1813-1883)

Good-Night

Matthew Emery (b. 1991)

Mark Ramsay, conductor
Benedict Su, piano

Tjak!

Stephen Hatfield (b. 1956)

Samuel Poole, caller

Fergus an' Molly (from *Celtic Songs*)

Vijay Singh (b. 1966)

Korin Thomas-Smith, soloist
Graydon Mulholland, Travis Quirk, guitar
Tristan Durie, flute

University of Toronto Women's Chorus
Frances Farrell, conductor
Leanne Piller, assistant conductor
Jialiang Zhu, collaborative pianist

Jerusalem

Michael McGlynn (b.1964)

Martina Myskohild, soprano
Elisabeth Dubois, soprano
Saige Carlson, soprano

Beata omnes qui timent Dominum

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

from *Laudate pueri*, Op. 39, No. 2

Trio Soloists: Tessah Dunn, Camilla Smith, Renae Wolfesberger, Evelina Zoubareva, soprano;
Cyra Asli, Linda Goldberg, Sofya Voronko, Emma Wallace, 2nd soprano;
Cristina Lanz, Cassandra Karvonen, Tatjana Jaluvka, Stephanie Plummer, alto
Leanne Piller, conductor

Sound the Trumpet

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

from *Come Ye Sons of Art*, Z.323

Leanne Piller, conductor

Temunà

Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

Kallà kalà

from *Five Hebrew Love Songs*

Julia Mirzoev, violinist
Carol Wang, percussionist

No Time

arr. Susan Brumfield

Take Me to the Water

Rollo Dillworth (b. 1970)

This concert is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Music in Choral Conducting for Mark Ramsay, Leanne Piller, and Tracy Wong,
and for the DMA in Choral Conducting for André Heywood.

Program Notes

WOMEN'S CHAMBER CHOIR

How merrily we live: Michael East was an English organist and composer who was appointed Master of the Choristers at Lichfield Cathedral in 1618, a position which he held for thirty years. Almost all of East's compositions were published in seven collections which consisted of madrigals, pastorals, anthems, "Neopolitanes", "fancies", various songs and other works for treble and bass viols. *How merrily we live* is taken from *The Second Set of Madrigales to 3, 4, and 5 parts, apt for Viols and Voices* (1606). This madrigal is characterized by imitative polyphony and word painting. There are moments of "voice exchange" where two voice parts in the same range trade melodic material imitatively at the same pitch level to produce an interchange of similar timbres.

Songs from "The Princess": Gustav Holst

was an English composer, born into a family that had been musicians for generations. He pursued a career as a composer by studying at the Royal College of Music under Charles Villiers Stanford and was later a significant influence on younger English composers such as Michael Tippett and Benjamin Britten. Holst composed fifty-two choral works and his compositional style of unconventional time signatures, ostinato, bitonality and occasional polytonality set him apart from his contemporaries. Vaughan Williams remarked: "Holst was not afraid of being obvious when the occasion demanded, nor did he hesitate to be remote when remoteness expressed his purpose." *Songs from "The Princess"* was composed for the performance of Tennyson's long narrative poem "The Princess" at the James Allen's Girls School, Dulwich, South London, which Holst worked as a music teacher. Compositional devices such as antiphonal and echo choirs, repeated sections in parallel major and minor and various canonic techniques gave each song a unique enchantment.

Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda: Inspired by his Theosophist stepmother, Holst

developed an interest in Hindu literature and philosophy and studied Sanskrit at University College in London so that he could make his own translations. The *Rig Veda* (Sanskrit for "praise" and "knowledge") is an ancient Indian sacred collection of Vedic hymns and was composed in the early Vedic period (1750-1000 BCE). Some of the verses are still recited as Hindu prayers today, putting these among the world's oldest religious texts in continued use. The *Rig Veda* contains mystical, mythological and poetical accounts of the origin of the world, hymns praising the gods, and ancient prayers for life. Alan Edgar Frederic Dickinson, in his book *Holst's Music – A Guide*, describes these vedic settings as pictorial rather than religious. While the text is set to western music characteristics, Holst experimented with Indian *raga* (scales) in certain sections of the music.

Gloria: Juno nominee **Larysa Kuzmenko**

is a Toronto-based composer and pianist. Her music has been performed and broadcast throughout the world. Her works have been commissioned, performed and recorded on CD by many outstanding artists. Kuzmenko's works demonstrate a strong affinity towards the mainstream tradition of classical music. She imbues her music with strong melodic sense, and a firm rooting in traditional, albeit tonal processes. She has appeared as a pianist in several countries, and has performed at Carnegie Hall, the St. Lawrence Centre, Roy Thomson Hall, and Massey Hall, as well as several other venues throughout Canada. Kuzmenko is currently on staff at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music, where she teaches piano, harmony, and composition. She is married to Canadian composer Gary Kulesha. *Gloria* for Women's chorus and piano was jointly commissioned by Bella Voce Women's Chorus of Vermont, Elektra Women's Choir of Vancouver and the University of Toronto Women's Chamber Choir. It was premiered in Burlington, Vermont on May 17, 2014. www.larysakuzmenko.com

Notes compiled by Tracy Wong

MEN'S CHORUS

Let Your Voice Be Heard celebrates the free improvisatory spirit of an African drumming circle, but with voices. Brought to North America by Ghanaian master drummer Abraham Adzenyah, this work comprises only a bass ostinato (clearly articulated in the opening of the piece) and a melody line outlined by the tenors, with the rest of the melodic and rhythmic material meant to be improvised. To facilitate suitability for a fifty-voice ensemble, melodic ideas from various performances of the professional men's ensemble Cantus (from Minneapolis, USA) were considered in the construction of melodies for the inner voices. Soloists and instrumentalists provide the necessary improvised feel. Special thanks to Frances Farrell for leading a vocal improvisation workshop with the men.

A cantata for Christmas Day, **Uns ist ein Kind geboren** ("Unto us a child is born") has long been attributed to J.S. Bach under the catalog number BWV 142. The work may have actually been composed in 1720 by Bach's predecessor at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig, Johann Kuhnau. The Christmas morning service was typically a musical spectacle which would have included two cantatas – one after the gospel reading, and another during communion – so it is likely that Bach reused his predecessor's work at some point to fulfill the musical requirements of the feast day. Although set in A-minor, the work manages to retain a joyful quality fitting of the occasion. The text is by German theologian Erdmann Neumeister, who contributed libretti to five of Bach's cantatas.

One of Wagner's middle works, **Tannhäuser** features mythological themes central to German Romantic opera. Like many of Wagner's later works, the opera confronts the internal struggle between sacred and profane love. The opera premiered in Dresden in 1845, but was substantially altered for its Paris premiere in 1861, and continues to exist in two distinct versions.

After singing a love song to Venus and drawing disapproval from his host, the protagonist Tannhäuser must journey with a number of pilgrims to seek forgiveness. The thematic material from this chorus was so powerful, Wagner chose to use it for the opening of opera's overture, making it one of the most memorable themes from the work.

At the age of 23, composer Matthew Emery has already emerged as one of the most respected names in Canadian choral music. A former choirboy of the Amabile Choirs in London, Ontario, Emery went on to study composition with Stephen Chatman at the University of British Columbia. He has won several prizes, including the top composition competitions for both the American Choral Director's Association (2013) and the Association of Canadian Choral Communities (2014). The text for this musical setting is also by a young prodigy – Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906) who was the first African-American poet, novelist, and playwright to gain national popularity among both black and white readers.

Adapted from a Balinese ritual, **Tjak!** commemorates an epic battle from the Hindu Ramayana between Prince Rama and his wife's kidnapper, Ravana – the demon king of Lanka (present day Sri Lanka). Rama calls on the Vanara – monkey-like demi-gods who lead Rama to victory. The "Ketjak" (or "Monkey Chant") ceremony is often performed for several successive nights as a means of ridding the community of evil forces. The chanters sit in circles, as it is believed that demons can only move in straight lines. This belief is echoed in the seemingly chaotic, non-linear rhythmic organization of the vocal parts. Although the subject of the ceremony is ancient, the ritual in its present form did not originate until the 1930s as a way of showcasing Balinese culture to tourists.

Fergus an' Molly is the first in a set of three Celtic songs set by Vijay Singh, Professor of Music at Central Washington University. Although not a folk song, the work captures

the Celtic folk spirit through engaging storytelling, homey instrumentation, and rollicking rhythmic motives.

Notes compiled by André Heywood

WOMEN'S CHORUS

When shall our sorrow have an end?/Thy joy, when shall we see? These lyrics from the chorus of Michael McGlynn's setting of the traditional Irish hymn, **Jerusalem**, embody a yearning to enter the New Jerusalem, which according to Scripture is a heavenly city where both God and the saints reside. (Randall Price, *The New Jerusalem*) This desire to enter this heavenly city is conveyed musically with the use of heterophony; singers perform the opening hymn tune individually at different tempi, resulting in a continuous undulation of repeated melodic fragments.

References to Jerusalem appear in psalm 128, the first line of which forms the lyrics to Mendelssohn's **Beati omnes qui timent Dominum**. One of the earliest composers for female choirs in the Romantic Era, Mendelssohn drew inspiration for the Opus 39 motets upon hearing nuns singing in a nearby church while out for a walk during his visit to Rome in 1830. No doubt the ethereal nature of this piece is reflective of this. Scored for women's chorus and solo trio, the homorhythmic texture and surging vocal lines underline the reassuring message of the lyrics: "Blessed are they that fear the Lord and walk in his ways."

A marked spirit of celebration is captured by Purcell in the duet **Sound the Trumpet**, whose imitative vocal lines mimic idiomatic trumpet figures. Originally scored for two countertenors and basso continuo, this

piece is from his musical ode *Come Ye Sons of Art*, written in 1694 in honour of the birthday of Queen Mary II of England.

Eric Whitacre conveys a more intimate portrait of joy in the first two movements of **Five Hebrew Lovesongs**. Composed in 1996, Whitacre set these Hebrew lyrics, written by Hila Plitman, for a concert featuring violin, voice, and piano. Of these pieces, Whitacre writes, "These songs are profoundly personal for me, born entirely out of my new love for this soprano, poet, and now my beautiful wife, Hila Plitmann." (Preface to *Five Hebrew Lovesongs*)

The exuberant rhythms of Whitacre's *Kalá kallá* are replaced by persistent quarter-note pulses in Susan Brumfield's **No Time**. Brumfield braids strands of two American camp meeting songs, *Rise O Father Rise*, and *No Time*, into a moving depiction of comfort as the narrator embraces the final stages of life: *No time to tarry here, for I'm on my journey home*.

Rollo Dillworth's **Take Me to the Water** is about a journey to a new home, and the promise of a new life. Drawing from the vast repertory of African American spirituals, Dillworth incorporates two songs *Down By the Riverside* and *Wade in the Water*, as well as jubilant gospel rhythms to convey themes of comfort and joy. Water, Dillworth notes in the preface to this piece, is not only used as a symbol of spiritual rebirth, but as a key to avoiding recapture as water would mask the scent of an escaping slave. These messages of freedom and escape to a new life are embedded in Dillworth's lyrics: *Take me to the water!/Take me to the sea!/ Take me to the river so that my spirit can be free!*

Notes compiled by Frances Farrell

Acknowledgements:

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Frances Farrell for leading an improvisation workshop with the Men's Chorus.

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Sydney Baedke
Emma Barnaby
Nicole Becic
Myriam Blardone
Vicky Chiu
Anna Chung
Mackenzie Clark
Carla-Grace Colaguori
Stacy Collins
Lila Cooper
Pauline Feng
Julia Frodyma
Marija Gligorevic
Eleanor Hart
Angel He
Nadia Kim
Chris Kim
Florence Lee
Amanda Lee
Sophie Ling
Daniele Loach
Emily Lynch
Lusila Mazi
Edmee Nataprawira
Laura Packer
Alexandra Park
Leanne Piller
Julianne Porteous
Kelsey Robinson
Rachel Sherret
Charlotte Siegel
Annie Suh
Michelle Teh
Rebecca Townsend
Mariya Valtina
Liberty Vorvis
Tracy Wong

MEN'S CHORUS

Alex Altshuler
Bradley Barnham
Matthew Boutda
Brandon Burek
Jotham Candido
Gian Carlo Candinario
Wing-Kee Chan
Joohyung Chang
Victor Cheng
Kenneth Cheong
Kevin Cheung
Stanford Jee-Fong Cheung
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